

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELIZE 00361 141923Z

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

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FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE EASHDC 3039

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELIZE 0361

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ES BH CS

SUBJECT: SALVADORAN SETTLERS IN BELIZE

REFERENCE: SAN JOSE 2442

1. IN A GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH SALVADORAN CONGEN CASTILLO APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS AGO BEFORE HE LEFT ON VACATION IN U.S., CONGEN SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WERE "THREE TO FOUR HUNDRED" SALVADORANS IN BELIZE. IN RETROSPECT, AFTER RECEIVING REFTEL, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WAS DELIBERATELY A BIT INDEFINITE ALTHOUGH THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT WAS NOT BEING PURSUED.

2. THE OPPOSITION PRESS HAS HAD OCCASIONAL REFERENCES TO SALVADORANS ARRIVING IN THE CONTEXT THAT THEY AND/OR OTHER FOREIGNERS RECEIVE BETTER TREATMENT FROM THE GOB THAN LOCAL NATIONALS IN SOME INSTANCES.

3. SALVADORANS WOULD BE RELATIVELY HARD TO IDENTIFY AS SUCH IN VIEW OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF SPANISH-SPEAKING RESIDENTS OF BELIZE WITH LOCAL, MEXICAN, HONDURAN AND GSATEMALAN ORIGINS. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY LARGE INFLUX OF SALVADORANS, BUT BELIEVE THERE IS A SLOW TRICKLE OF IMMIGRANTS. MOST OF THEM
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ARE PROBABLY SUBSISTANCE TYPE FARMERS OR FARM LABORERS,

BUT WE HAVE HEARD OF SOME LAND PURCHASES IN WHICH SALVADORANS ARE SUPPOSEDLY INVOLVED.

4. ON HONDURAN-SALVADORAN FRICTION, CASTILLO REMARKED THAT THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES WERE PROFITING FROM THE SITUATION AND HAD NO OVERWHELMING INTEREST IN SEEING RELATIONS NORMALIZED.

5. WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE SALVADORAN INPUT. SO FAR WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY OFFICIAL CONCERN, AND BELIZE IS GENERALLY HAPPY TO HAVE IMMIGRANTS (ON ITS OWN TERMS) TO POPULATE THE SALVADOR-SIZED COUNTRY WHICH HAS A CURRENT POPULATION OF ONLY 130,000. THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, A.A. HUNTER, CS, INCIDENTALLY, AN HONORARY SALVADORAN VICE CONSUL. WOLLAM

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